

all in

to 07

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

10010

The
three y
misrep
party c
nity gr
of the l
piring
newspa
this dir
Session
Opposi
been i
creased

The
facts, p
elector
pose of
ception
extraor
Opposi
elsewhe

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE

MEMBERS' INDEMNITY.

HYPOCRISY OF THE

OPPOSITION

UNMASKED.

Party Misrepresentation.

The Opposition press have, for the past three years, persistently endeavoured, by misrepresentations and otherwise, to make party capital out of the increased indemnity granted to Members in the first Session of the Legislative term which is now expiring; and the unscrupulous efforts of newspaper writers and pamphleteers in this direction were seconded in the late Session of the Legislature by the very Opposition members who had with others been instrumental in obtaining the increased indemnity.

The following true statement of the facts, prepared for the information of the electors of all parties, will effectually dispose of any misrepresentations or misconceptions likely to have been created by the extraordinary course pursued by the Opposition in the House, or their allies elsewhere.

WHY THE INDEMNITY WAS RAISED.

The increase in the indemnity to \$800 was made on the application of members of both political parties. It was acquiesced in by the Government because they were ultimately induced to coincide in the view strongly urged upon them from both sides of the House, that such an increase was just and proper.

Conferences and Correspondence.

Before the matter was brought before Ministers, conferences and correspondence had taken place amongst members on both sides of the House. Of the letters which passed two have been made public. One of them was from Mr. Meredith, the present leader of the Opposition, to Dr. Clarke, the member for North Norfolk, and was, by permission of the writer, read by Dr. Clarke in the course

of the recent debate on the Address, when the indemnity question was under discussion.

Mr. Meredith, M.P.P., to Dr. Clarke,
M.P.P.

Toronto, Jan'y 29, 1876.

MY DEAR SIR,

With regard to the proposed increase of the members' indemnity, my own idea is that \$600 is a sufficient sum. But I have no desire to stand in the way of the increase should a majority of the members of the House consider it necessary. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, should the proposition, whether acted on or not, be made use of outside of the House for political purposes. Mr. Lauder takes the same view of the matter as I have expressed.

Yours truly,

W. R. MEREDITH.

Not Quite Consistent.

Although in this letter Mr. Meredith intimates that in his opinion \$600 "was sufficient," in a speech he made on the 8th February, 1877, Mr. Meredith said \$800 "was not an undue indemnity." But any one reading the letter will see that what Mr. Meredith meant by it was that he was willing to pocket the money if others would take the responsibility of asking for it.

Mr. Monk, M.P.P., to Dr. Clarke, M.P.P.

Another Opposition member, Mr. Monk, M.P.P. for Carlton, wrote, expressing his own, his then leader's, and others of his friends' views and intentions as follows:

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
Toronto, 29th January, 1876.

MY DEAR CLARKE,

With reference to the "round robin," I beg to say that Messrs. Deacon, Merriek, and myself, consulted Mr. Cameron last night on the subject, and he said, as far as he was concerned, he did not want an increase of indemnity, but he had no objection to an increase being made; that he would not use it as a charge against

the Government or its supporters in or out of the House, and that we were at liberty to say so for him.

Yours truly,

G. W. MONK.

Deputations to Ministers.

A document was signed by most of the members of the House, irrespective of party, requesting the Government to place the proposed increase in the Estimates, and deputations, constituted of members of both parties, waited on Ministers to induce them to comply with the application. It is now no matter of secrecy that the subject was fully discussed in private session, and the urgency of leading Opposition members, and their very pronounced expressions in favour of the increase on that occasion, have been fully admitted by those gentlemen themselves.

Reasons Urged.

In urging the Government to consent, it was represented that the sessional indemnity of members of the House of Commons had been raised from \$600 to \$1,000 only two years previously at the instance of Sir John A. Macdonald, then First Minister of Canada, and that the step had met with universal concurrence. It was shown that the average length of the sessions at Toronto and Ottawa had for some years been substantially equal; that the duties performed by a legislator at Toronto were quite as onerous as those discharged by one at Ottawa; that the Legislation was, of its kind, not less important; that the expenses at both places were about the same; that the members of both Legislatures were selected from the same classes of the community; and that the extra-legislative work of a local member was often more arduous than that of a member of the House of Commons. It was also well known that the remuneration, direct or indirect, of some of the representatives in the American States' Legislatures, whose duties are similar to those of members of the Ontario Assembly,

was con-
member
demnity
now \$1,
per ses-
ances
nois, in
\$1,168,
low ra-
inciden-
unknow

Fall

It w
interes
repres
that m
them f
penses
positio
and o
where
was al
repres
and m
means
Legisl
that el
ducted
and th
Voters
pense,
subscr
that a
object
extent
he wo
pected
tion,
charge
that i
busine
at ser
his bu
clients
confid
practic
sequen

supporters in or
that we were at

truly,
G. W. MONK.
Ministers.

and by most of the
irrespective of
ernment to place
the Estimates,
ted of members
on Ministers to
with the applica-
r of secrecy that
discussed in pri-
gency of lead-
and their very
a favour of the
have been fully
en themselves.

ed.
ent to consent,
he sessional in-
the House of
from \$600 to
viously at the
Macdonald, then
and that the
l concurrence.
rage length of
and Ottawa had
ntially equal ;
by a legislator
erous as those
awa ; that the
not less import-
t both places
the members
selected from
community ; and
ork of a local
arduous than
e of Commons.
the remuner-
some of the
merican States'
are similar to
rio Assembly,

was considerably higher than Ontario local members received. In New York the indemnity was \$1,500 per session, and is now \$1,200. In Pennsylvania it is \$1,000 per session, with sundry additional allowances to swell that amount. In Illinois, in 1878, each representative received \$1,168, and in other States a nominally low rate of indemnity is enhanced by incidental emoluments which are wholly unknown in Ontario.

Fair Compensation in the Public Interest.

It was further urged that in the public interest, the principle of granting to the representatives of the people an allowance that may be supposed fairly to compensate them for their services, loss of time and expenses incurred in connection with their position, is recognised in most countries, and especially in all young countries where parliamentary institutions exist. It was also pointed out, that the duties of a representative and the sacrifices of time and money it entails, are not by any means confined to attendance while the Legislature is in session. It was shown that elections, however legitimately conducted, cannot be carried on without loss, and that the proper supervision of the Voters' Lists was a serious item of expense, to which a member often had to subscribe liberally. Moreover, it was said that a member has to contribute to public objects affecting his constituency to an extent to which, as a private individual, he would not be liable ; that he is expected to respond to calls upon his attention, at all times and at his own charges, when the House is not sitting ; that if a merchant, he must leave his business in the care of others, often at serious pecuniary loss ; if a lawyer, his business is seriously diminished, from clients in his absence transferring their confidence to others ; if a physician, his practice falls off permanently, in consequence of patients whose cases admit

of no delay, calling in another practitioner ; or perhaps, in either case, he has to take a partner, and thus submit to sharing with a substitute a considerable portion of his income. While it was conceded that some members might benefit pecuniarily by their position, it was pressed upon the Government as an indisputable fact, that the indemnity, even at \$800, would fall far short of the actual loss sustained in the case of others through a connection with public life. The same indemnity must however be paid to all ; and it was suggested that, as \$1000 had been recognised and acquiesced in by the whole Dominion as a fair average allowance at Ottawa, so the people would take the same view of a similar allowance to members at Toronto, and that the sum named was as just and reasonable as to be free from any possible objection.

The Government Consent.

The arguments urged on the Government ultimately induced the Ministers to accede to the request to the extent of proposing an additional sum of \$200 for each member, making the allowance \$800. That sum was less by \$200 than the allowance to the members at Ottawa, and, assuming, as everybody appeared to do, that \$1,000 was a reasonable allowance for the members of the Commons, it seemed easier to maintain that \$800 was too little for the members of the Assembly than to insist that it was too much. Accordingly, on Feb. 3, 1876, a supplementary estimate was brought down containing the following item : "Indemnity to members—increase, \$17,600" being \$200 for each member.

The Increased Indemnity Discussed.

The *Toronto Globe*, the *Toronto Mail* and other newspapers had articles against the increase, and some reference was made to these editorials when the item in the Estimates was before the House.

What the late Leader of the Opposition said.

HON. MATTHEW CROOKS CAMERON, THEN LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, said—

He thought it right, in consequence of what had appeared in the public press on this matter, to say that, in his opinion, the House had acted perfectly right in that matter; that he believed the members of the Government were not sufficiently paid; and that, as he had stated when the matter was discussed with closed doors, he entirely approved of the course of hon. gentlemen in that respect. He had said, with reference to the indemnity to members, that, in his opinion, *Eight Hundred dollars was not more than an adequate amount to compensate them for their labour and expense here. He wished to assume his full share of the responsibility that might attach to the action of the House in regard to this matter, though he might say he was speaking for himself and no one else.*

What the present Leader of the Opposition said.

MR. MEREDITH, NOW LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, said—

Though he had made no remark in reference to the matter when it had been discussed with closed doors, he wished to say that he entirely concurred in the observations made by hon. members on both sides of the House as to the propriety of the course the Government had taken. He felt that the salaries paid to members of the Government were not adequate to their important duties, and to the important positions they were called upon to fill. *With regard, also, to the increase of the indemnity to members, he would say that he strongly felt that the House would be compromising its dignity if it did not unanimously concur in this resolution.*

What Mr. Scott said.

MR. SCOTT, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR WEST PETERSBORO', said—

Had been of opinion before he became a member of the House that the salaries of the Ministers of the Crown in Ontario were not adequate to the position. *With regard to the increased indemnity to members, he was also prepared to justify that, for he could not see why hon. gentlemen in that House were not entitled to the same measure of indemnity as members of the House of Commons. The*

work was as important here to the Province of Ontario as the work of the House of Commons was, and it was equally onerous to members.

What the Liberal Conservative Almanac-man said.

MR. CREIGHTON, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR NORTH GREY,

Was of opinion that the amount formerly paid to members of the Executive was too small, and that the increase was not by any means too large.

What Dr. Boulter said.

DR. BOULTER, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR NORTH HASTINGS,

Said they had at last struck a subject on which they could all agree. He believed this was a move in the right direction, and one which he believed the country would sustain.

What the late Deputy Leader of the Opposition said.

HON. WM. McDUGALL, THEN DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION,

Believed the sound, honest opinion of the country would concur in the propriety of an adequate compensation for the public service. The general principle he had always contended for as a public man and a journalist was that, if they wanted to preserve honesty in the management of public affairs, those who were chosen to public stations should be reasonably well paid. They had only to look across the borders to Republicanism in the form in which it had developed there. Public men, kept down by the force of public opinion to a miserable pittance, managed to indemnify themselves in some way for the services for which the public should have paid them ungrudgingly. The result was that in the end the public had to pay a great deal more in consequence of that state of things than if a fair amount had been allowed in the first place for the performance of the public duty. He was satisfied that the figures placed in the Estimates would not adequately reward gentlemen in the position of Members of the Executive, capable of performing the duties of their position. Looking at the expense of living in this city, and at the rewards of persons of similar attainments and devotion to duty, and at the labour and responsibility of their office, the salaries to be paid were very small ones.

* * * He was prepared to defend his own action in this particular on its own merits, as an act of justice; and if his constituents did not think two or three months of his services were worth Eight Hundred dollars, they must find some one else to work for them.

What Mr. Lauder said.

MR. LAUDER, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR EAST GREY,

Concurred in the views of other speakers.

What Mr. Broder said.

Mr. Broder said, that the people in the country, as a rule, had no idea of the onerous duties that Members of the Executive had to perform. He approved of the increase in the indemnity, as a member in this Province was worth as much as one in Quebec.

The foregoing quotations are taken from the Parliamentary report of the Toronto *Globe* of Feb. 7, 1876. The report in the Toronto *Mail* is substantially the same. In the *Mail* the HON. M. C. CAMERON is reported as saying further, he considered it his duty to state, that he himself had suggested the increase of Ministers' salaries.

GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO REDUCE THE INDEMNITY.

The policy of increasing the indemnity, however, having during the recess been criticised unfavourably by the press of both parties, some hostile feeling had been excited in the country, and Mr. Cameron in the next session (1877), from his place in the House, notified the Government that one member of the Opposition had intimated to him an intention of moving for a return to \$600 in case such a motion were not made by anybody else. The Government therefore determined to give the members of the Legislature an opportunity of expressing by a vote their free and unbiassed opinion as to whether the indemnity should be continued at Eight Hundred dollars or reduced to SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS, its former amount. That no party advantage

might be gained by either side, and that every one might vote without the least restraint, the reduction was moved by Mr. Crooks in Committee of Supply, where no names are taken, and it is understood that no political consequences follow upon a division.

In introducing this motion, Mr. Crooks made a speech which further divested the motion of all party significance.

The Motion Lost.

The motion being put, and the YEAS and NAYS respectively counted by the Chairman, it was found that they stood as follows:—

YEAS.....	35
NAYS.....	33

Majority to retain the amount at \$800.... 3

They "Vote by Stealth, and Blush to find it Fame."

A few days afterwards, the Toronto *Mail* having obtained a list of the division from a member who was present, published it in its editorial columns; and as the accuracy of the list has never been questioned, it may be assumed to be correct so far as Opposition members are concerned. The course taken by the Opposition in the session of 1879, makes it proper and necessary that the information this list affords should be generally known.

By this list it appears that in the YEAS favourable to a reduction to \$600, there were—

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS.....	23
OPPOSITION.....	12
Total.....	35

While the NAYS were composed of—

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS.....	31
OPPOSITION.....	17
Total.....	38

Reduction Defeated by Opposition Votes

It will be seen by this—

(1) THAT IF THE OPPOSITION HAD SO DESIRED, THEY COULD HAVE CARRIED THE RESOLUTION; and

(2) THAT IT WAS BY OPPOSITION VOTES THE EIGHT HUNDRED DOLLARS WAS SUSTAINED.

THE FOLLOWING WERE THE OPPOSITION MEMBERS who, as reported by *The Mail*, VOTED TO RETAIN THE EIGHT HUNDRED DOLLARS :—

Name.	Constituency.
BAKER,	Russell.
BELL,	West Toronto.
BOUTER,	North Hastings.
BRODER,	Dundas.
CODE,	South Lanark.
COUTTS,	East Kent.
DRAGON,	North Renfrew.
FLESHER,	Cardwell.
GRANGE,	Lennox.
HARKIN,	Prescott.
KEAN,	East Simcoe.
LONG,	West Simcoe.
MACDOUGALL,	South Simcoe.
MOSTYN,	North Lanark.
O'SULLIVAN,	East Peterboro'.
PRESTON,	South Leeds.
SCOTT,	West Peterboro'.

Opposition Speeches.

Nor did those Opposition members who voted to reduce the indemnity to Six Hundred dollars do so from any change or pretended change of opinion as to the larger amount being just and equitable. The following reports of their speeches are taken from the *Toronto Mail* of February 9, 1877. The motion made by Mr. Crooks was to reduce the vote on the item of Legislation by the sum of \$17,600, or \$200 from each member.

Mr. M. C. Cameron.

HON. MATTHEW CROOKS CAMERON, THEN LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, said—He had taken his share of the blame, if there was any blame, and he had stated throughout the country that the Opposition were equally responsible with the Government. He did not think that any member

came to the House for the mere matter of the indemnity; for while none perhaps gained, many lost through their absence from their regular business. The sum of EIGHT HUNDRED DOLLARS was sufficient to keep members in general from absolute loss, but it was not a sufficient inducement for a gentleman to come to the House specially on its account. In view of the general feeling throughout the country, he thought the amount (as reduced) would be acceptable to members, and he was willing to agree to the reduction.

Mr. Meredith.

MR. MEREDITH, NOW LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION,

While he distinctly affirmed that *Eight Hundred dollars was not an undue indemnity*, yet thought in matters of this kind, of such a personal nature, members ought to bow to the wishes of the constituency.

Mr. Hardy moves to strike out the indemnity for the Session.

Mr. Hardy (Ministerial) moved, seconded by Mr. Hodgins (Ministerial), to strike out the item relating to the indemnity entirely.

He congratulated the Government on yielding to public opinion. He apprehended that when the increase was made no member contemplated that mercenary motives would be imputed to him. His own opinion was, the Government had not gone low enough; and he moved that the whole item be struck out, and members would then have an opportunity of showing that they could serve the country disinterestedly.—(*Globe and Mail* report).

Mr. Lauder.

MR. LAUDER, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR EAST GREY,

While he would support the motion of the member for South Brant (Mr. Hardy), still he did not think the rank and file of the people objected to the increase from Six Hundred to Eight Hundred dollars.

Mr. Scott.

MR. SCOTT, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR WEST PETERBORO',

Opposed the motion of Mr. Hardy. He

mere matter of
none perhaps
their absence
The sum of
LARS was suf-
general from
a sufficient in-
to come to the
punt.

ing throughout
ne amount (as
le to members,
e to the raduc-

ADER OF THE

ed that Eight
undus indem-
s of this kind,
members ought
constituency.

e out the in-
sion.

oved, second-
rial), to strike
the indemnity

overnment on

He appre-
ase was made-
at mercenary
him. His own
had not gone
that the whole
members would
showing that
untry disin-
report).

MEMBER FOR

the motion
Brant (Mr.
nk the rank
d to the in-
Eight Hun-

MEMBER FOR

Hardy. He

had approved of the increase from Six to Eight Hundred dollars, as he could not understand why members of that House were not entitled to the same sum as the members at Ottawa.

Mr. McDougall.

HON. WM. MACDOUGALL, THEN DEPUTY

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION,

Condemned the Government for retreating from the position they had taken last session. If members at Ottawa were to be paid, so should local members. The only opponents were a few newspaper writers. He felt that his services were worth the paltry sum of Eight Hundred dollars. He read quotations to show that in the United States corruption was largely due to the small amount of indemnity in many cases. The House had almost unanimously agreed to the Eight Hundred dollars last session; and without it could show clearly that its position was untenable; it would be an undignified act to contradict what they had before affirmed. He (Mr. Macdougall) devoted as much time as he could to his private business, but Eight Hundred dollars did not cover his loss by being a representative in the House. He felt bound to vote against both motions.

Mr. Deacon.

MR. DEACON, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR NORTH RENFREW,

Heartily approved of the position taken by the member for South Simcoe (Mr. Macdougall).

[Mr. Deacon had on the 14th March 1878, said (as reported by the Toronto Mail) with regard to Ministers' salaries: "He thought the salaries of the heads of departments ought to be at least \$5000 each. * * * He believed that the country and the House were of the opinion that the salaries of Ministers should be increased, and he thought the present Ministers would find themselves supported if they proposed this very necessary increase."]

Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR WEST TORONTO,

Would not go back on his action of last year.

Dr. Boulter.

DR. BOULTER, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR NORTH HASTINGS,

Thought they had acted right last year, and he was prepared and intended to maintain that course before his constituents.

Mr. Code.

MR. CODE, OPPOSITION MEMBER FOR SOUTH LANARK,

Believed Eight Hundred dollars was little enough. He held the whole House was responsible for its action last session, and he was prepared to support the Government in the past, in the matter. He was prepared to vote in support of the motion of last session, and so ought every member who had received the extra Two Hundred dollars.

No sign given in 1878.

In the Session of 1878 the indemnity remained at \$800, no member on either side proposing a reduction. No one would have had the least right to complain if such a motion had been made from any quarter, whether it had been made from deference to a real or supposed public opinion, or from the member so moving having changed his own mind as to the propriety of the increased allowance.

Wrong and Dishonourable.

But what was wrong and dishonourable under the circumstances narrated, was any effort on the part of members to make party capital out of the affair. The whole transaction had, from the first, been taken by general consent out of the party arena; the increased indemnity was acquiesced in on that understanding, and faith was kept on this point by members on both sides so long as Mr. Cameron was leader of the Opposition. Twelve members of the Opposition (including Mr. Cameron, and some of his most influential followers) voted in 1876 for the reduction, as without any breach of faith they had a right to do; a still larger number of liberal members (including the Ministers) voted in the same way, as they had a right to do.

But party capital was not the object at that time of members on either side of the House. All frankly assumed their share of the responsibility. It was reserved for the Opposition under a new leadership to adopt a different and most discreditable course.

Condemning their own Friends.

The increase is spoken of by supporters of the Opposition who are not members of the House, as "the indemnity grab," or "the salary grab;" and ignorant or unscrupulous writers have, in the interest of their party and its representatives, pretended to denounce the increase as "plunder," to consider it as "shameful," and as "obtained scandalously;"—dishonestly concealing the fact, that but for the active part taken by their own leaders and friends in promoting the increase, the proposal to increase the indemnity, whether reasonable or not, would never for one moment have been entertained; that their leaders and friends were from the first promoters and defenders of the so-called "grab;" that they received the so-called "plunder;" and that they were guilty of the so-called "shameful" and "scandalous" conduct which is denounced. The writers in question have not hitherto had a word to say against an increase of double the amount by Sir John A. Macdonald and his Government, to the members at Ottawa, though the time of those persons is no more valuable, nor are their expenses greater, than the time and expenses of members of the Local Legislature.

The Indemnity Question Raised.

In the Session of 1879, during the first day's debate on the answer to the Lieutenant-Governor's speech, and before any other business had been entered upon, Mr. Bethune, member for Stormont and a supporter of the Government, expressed an opinion in favour of reducing the sessional indemnity of members. It was already known that a pretty general

feeling existed among Government supporters in the House in the same direction, and it was anticipated on both sides, that Ministers would themselves propose a reduction.

In that case neither party could, out of what had occurred, make political capital with electors to whom the increase was objectionable. If Ministers proposed the reduction, it was Ministers who also had the responsibility of the increase; the reduction, like the increase, would have the equal support of both sides of the House; and every member of the Opposition, like every supporter of the Government, would have to defend his action in the matter on its own merits, as between himself personally and his constituents; exactly as was the intention and understanding when members on both sides united in persuading the Government that the increase was proper, that it would be approved by the people, and should be made.

Dishonourable Tactics.

But in this last session of the parliamentary term, it occurred to some of the Opposition leaders that the Opposition might manage, however dishonourably, to make out of the increase some party capital at the expense of the Government and its supporters, although they knew that, but for their own advocacy of the increase, the increase would not have taken place; although it had been solemnly declared that "under no circumstances" should it "be made use of for political purposes;" and although, for three sessions, the Opposition members had themselves been pocketing the money.

Amendment to the Address.

The way this piece of Opposition dishonesty was to be accomplished was this. The first business of the session is the Answer of the House to the Lieutenant Governor's speech. This answer is by parliamentary usage an echo of the speech itself, unless an amendment is moved as

a direct
the vi
the de
after
Excep
is op
amend
thus
liamen
knowl
with al
"The
rule to
and th
recipro
Crown
the add
respect
which
commu
Sovere
nothing
the mat
"Some
it to b
outact
ments
determi
does or
of the
exceptio
Hence
a politi
liamen
claratio
Admini
ment to
Macken
condem
lowed by
Macdon
ments to
Blair an
lature in
followed
resignat
shape of
when ne
exists, a
parliame
generally
(1) Be

Government sup-
the same dis-
ed on both sides,
mselves propose

ty could, out of
political capital
increase was
ers proposed the
rs who also had
increase; the re-
would have the
s of the House;
the Opposition,
the Government,
s action in the
as between him-
stituents; ex-
on and under-
on both sides
ne Government
er, that it would
e, and should be

'actics.'
of the parlia-
to some of the
the Opposition
dishonourably, to
ome party capital
ernment and its
knew that, but
the increase, the
taken place; al-
ly declared that
should it "be
purposes;" and
s, the Opposition
been pocketing

Address.
Opposition dis-
lished was this.
e session is the
the Lieutenant
a answer is by
who of the speech
ent is moved as

a direct trial of party strength, or with
the view of defeating the Government of
the day at the earliest possible moment
after the assembling of the Legislature.
Except for these purposes, modern custom
is opposed to the practice of moving
amendments to the Address. The rule is
thus stated in Mr. Todd's book on Par-
liamentary Government (a book of ac-
knowledge accuracy and of authority
with all parties), pp. 295, 296:

"It has now become a well-established
rule to regard the speech from the throne,
and the address in reply thereto, as
reciprocal acts of courtesy between the
Crown and the Houses of Parliament, and
the address itself as the unanimous and
respectful expression of the deference with
which the House should receive the first
communication of the session from the
Sovereign, and as pledging the House to
nothing, save the serious consideration of
the matters referred to therein.

"Sometimes the Opposition has deemed
it to be incumbent upon them, at the
outset of a session, to propose amend-
ments to the Address for the purpose of
determining whether the Administration
does or does not possess the confidence
of the House. But these are rare and
exceptional occurrences."

Hence a hostile amendment, moved by
a political opponent, is, according to par-
liamentary usage, equivalent to a de-
claration of no confidence in the
Administration. Such was the amend-
ment to the Address proposed by Mr.
Mackenzie at Ottawa in October, 1873,
condemnatory of the Pacific Scandal, fol-
lowed by the resignation of Sir John A.
Macdonald; such, too, were those amend-
ments to the Address moved by Messrs.
Blakely and Mackenzie in the Ontario Leg-
islature in December, 1871, and which were
followed by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's
resignation. But hostile motions in the
shape of amendments to the Address,
when no probability of carrying them
exists, are not only contrary to modern
parliamentary usage, but are also idle and
generally useless, for three reasons:—

(1) Because they effect nothing;

(2) Because, whatever they may be
ostensibly designed to effect can be more
easily attained by other means; and

(3) Because, owing to their implying
NO CONFIDENCE in the Ministers, they
cause party lines to be tightly drawn, and
so secure the smallest possible number, in-
stead of the largest possible number of
supporters on a division.

A Mean Conspiracy.

However, to create a little false capital,
the Opposition pretended to be very
zealous for retrenchment and economy,
and the Opposition leaders determined to
move that the subject of reducing the
indemnity should be thrust into the answer
to the Lieutenant-Governor's speech. They
knew that Ministers and their friends,
though contemplating the reduction,
must vote against such a motion as con-
trary to parliamentary usage, and as imply-
ing a censure on the Government; but the
purpose of the Opposition leaders was to
pretend that, by the motion, they had
forced upon the Government the reduction
which the Government should propose in
the coming Estimates; and if the amend-
ment should be voted down, they would
have had no scruple about using the vote
of the majority as evidence of hostility to
any reduction, though they knew the truth
to be otherwise.

How they went to Work.

To carry out the little scheme, on the
15th January last, Mr. Lauder, the member
for East Grey, moved, seconded by Mr.
Scott, the member for West Peterboro',
the following humcombe amendment to
the second paragraph of the Address:—

"While we rejoice with Your Honour
in the development of any enterprise
tending to the advancement of the agri-
cultural interests of the country, we are
of opinion that it is of essential import-
ance that the annual expenditure should
be kept within the annual revenue of the
Province."

This was, however, a comparatively
harmless piece of clap-trap, the worst that

could be said of it being that it implied in an underhand fashion a censure nobody dared to propose openly and directly.

Mr. Parkhill as "Catapaw."

So Mr. Parkhill, the innocent and newly elected member for Simcoe, was put up to act as "catapaw," and to move, seconded by Mr. Grange, member for Lennox, an amendment to Messrs. Laurier and Scott's amendment, as follows:

"That all the words in the Amendment after 'while' be struck out and the following substituted therefor: 'rejoicing with Your Honour in the development of all enterprises tending to the advancement of the agricultural interests of Ontario, we are of opinion that the administration of the affairs of the Province should be conducted with the utmost economy consistent with efficiency, and that in view of the general depression existing in the Province, the expenses of Legislative and Civil Government should be reduced, especially as regards the salaries of Ministers AND THE INDEMNITY TO MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE.'"

A Clumsy Trick.

The trick was too clumsy to deceive anybody. What such a motion meant, if it meant anything, was that the Government were censurable for not having announced such a policy in the Speech from the Throne. It was a miserable party device for "cornering" the Government and their supporters by making them appear to those unfamiliar with Parliamentary usage to be voting against retrenchment when they were only opposing a hypocritical and undeserved vote of censure.

Cheap Capital.

Had this disgraceful move succeeded, what would have happened? That the salaries and indemnities would consequently have been reduced? Not at all! What then? Why, that if the Government had been defeated, and Mr. Meredith and five of his friends had taken the

places of Mr. Mowat and his colleagues, they might have put what construction they pleased upon a merely abstract resolution like that moved, and have pocketed their full salaries and indemnities for another four years; or else the present Government might have had to go to the country, falsely represented to be insisting upon retaining the indemnity at its higher figure. So honour, consistency, good faith, promises, and all fairness were thrown aside and forgotten in this wretched effort to make a little false political capital.

Unblushing Effrontery.

The vote on Mr. Parkhill's amendment was taken on the 21st January, 1879, when Messrs.

BOUTLER,
BELL,
DEACON,
SCOTT,

MEREDITH,
LAUDER,
and
CREIGHTON,

whose opinions on the Indemnity question have been given, as well as Messrs.

BRODER,
CODE,
COUTTS,
FLESHER,
GRANGE,

HARKIN,
KRAM,
LONG,
MOSTYN, and
FREESTON,

who had voted against the proposal of the Government to reduce the indemnity from \$800 to \$600 in 1877, had every one of them the unblushing effrontery to vote, along with the whole of their party in the House, without waiting to see the Estimates for the year, TO CENSURE THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT REDUCING THE INDEMNITY. The following Opposition members, in addition to those whose names are above given, joined in this discreditable proceeding, though, like the other members above named, they had been parties to the increase which they were now dishonestly endeavouring to make capital out of, against their political opponents.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Constituency.</i>
BARR,	Dufferin.
BROWN,	South Ontario.
CALVIN,	Frontenac.
MACDOUGALL,	North Middlesex.
MCCOWAN,	West Wellington.
MERRICK,	Leeds and Grenville.
MONK,	Carleton.
RICHARDSON,	South Norfolk.
TOOLEY,	East Middlesex.
WHITE,	North Essex.
WIGLE,	South Essex.
WILLIS,	West Hastings.

Early Discovery of "The Cloven Foot."

But, of the whole crowd, not one stands in so unenviable a position as Mr. W. R. Meredith, the newly elected leader of the Opposition. Mr. Meredith had been chosen leader on the meeting of the House. His attainment of that position was received with approbation by the press of his party. But Mr. Meredith, it was evident, could stoop as low as any one to gain a political end, and would eat his own professions readily enough, in order to steal a march, if he could, on his political opponents.

Amendment Defeated.

The amendment was, of course, voted down.

THE INDEMNITY REDUCED.

It remains only to add, that when the Estimates were brought down by the Government, they provided, as had been expected and as they had always intended, for a reduction of the indemnity from \$800 to \$600, its former amount. This was done in accordance with public sentiment, and with the general desire of the Ministerial side of the House. The Government and their supporters claimed no party credit for the reduction; but it is manifest, on the other hand, from the facts which have been stated, that the attempt of the Opposition to make party capital out of the transaction was a fraud on the intelligence of the people. The reduction took place accordingly, a proceeding which probably caused genuine disappointment to the baffled schemers, who fancied the electors of Ontario were to be deluded by a transparent sham.